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DALLAS, TEXAS
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**GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO NEARLY
9 YEARS ON FEDERAL FIREARMS CHARGE**

Prosecution Part of Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative

United States Attorney Richard B. Roper announced that Mark Hernandez, age 36, of Lubbock, Texas, was sentenced this morning by the Honorable Sam R. Cummings, United States District Judge, to 105 months imprisonment. Hernandez is a member of the West Texas Tangos prison gang.

A federal grand jury in Lubbock indicted Hernandez in December 2005 on two federal firearms charges and in April 2006 he pleaded guilty to one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

On May 3, 2005, officers of the Lubbock Police Department (LPD) responded to a dispatch regarding an aggravated assault at CC's Bar and Grill located on 50th Street in Lubbock. When an LPD officer arrived at the scene, several people pointed to a 1984 Saturn vehicle and informed the officer that the driver had pointed a firearm at people in the CC's parking lot. The driver of the Saturn, Mark Hernandez, fled from the officer and LPD later found the vehicle abandoned. LPD officers discovered a cell phone clipped to the steering wheel and a 12-gauge shotgun shell underneath the driver's seat. LPD officers retraced Hernandez's route and discovered a sawed-off Springfield Model 940E 12-gauge shotgun at a construction site at 4900 West Loop 829 in Lubbock.

Witnesses at CC's said that Hernandez drove by in the 1984 Saturn and pointed a shotgun at two males. Hernandez's girlfriend said that she was with Hernandez at CC's on May 3, 2005, and that Hernandez confronted two men in CC's parking lot who had been flirting with her. She said that Hernandez drove by the two males and pulled out a shotgun from behind the seat.

Further investigation revealed that Hernandez had been convicted of a felony offense, assault on a public servant, in Lubbock County in July 2001 and sentenced to two years imprisonment, probated for three years. On April 9, 2002, Hernandez's probation was revoked and he was sentenced to two years imprisonment.

United States Attorney Roper commended the Lubbock Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey Haag of the Lubbock, Texas, United States Attorney's Office.